1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

855 education, and who do not see the desirable goal of full status
858 approaching constantly nearer.

Very often shortly after their emancipation—that is round about the age of five or six—children go through a stage of excessive bashfulness and timidity. Adult Lepchas think this silly and rather funny, and, with their habitual insensitiveness to differences of character, are liable to tease such shy children—to imitate them or make remarks about them in front of their faces. This bashfulness passes off gradually; boys generally get rid of it earlier; with girls it may last till marriage.

857 Between about the ages of five and twelve little girls spend much more time with their parents than little boys. Both boys and girls are with their elders nearly all the time that there is work to be done in the fields, but in the evenings and on holidays the boys are usually freer; the girls are wanted to help their mothers with the cooking and especially to mind and hold the younger siblings. The boys, especially if they have no sisters, may be wanted for the same work, but most of them have more liberty. A few of the girls —the tomboys—like to get away to play with the other children, but adults try to discourage this as a reputation for neglecting her work to go and play would tell against the girl's chances of marriage. The same holds good, but within somewhat wider limits, for boys; a boy who spent too much time amusing himself instead of working for the household would get a reputation for laziness, which would make him an undesirable groom.

The choice of companionship for playmates is usually extremely limited; companionship is chiefly based on approximately equal age, though, if there is a choice, relations or near neighbours are usually preferred. Boys usually work and play in groups of two or three; but these groups do not appear to be constant and depend more than anything on the children being at leisure, or engaged in the same work, simultaneously.

Lepcha children have no toys, nor is there any sort of organised game. To a great extent children play by themselves; in the house they will make piles of corn cobs or amuse themselves by arranging
● [15] grains in patterns (a characteristic trait of Lepcha children is a
531] great feeling for tidiness and neatness, and a predilection for straight lines; anything which can be folded straight or arranged in lines is so done with remarkable trueness; curves do not come into childish patterns, nor, for that matter into adult construction or weaving); out of doors they will play catch with suitable flowers